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It is called invisible "with respect to the internal work of the Spirit and truth of grace." Here the term "invisible" is plainly explained. It would seem impossible to misconstrue this natural and carefully explained use of the word.

The invisible church comprises the whole number who have or will have the work of grace in their hearts. Some of these are on earth. They are members of the invisible church. No others have a right to be members of local visible churches. Section 2 explains the Baptist doctrine of a regenerate local church membership "Of such ought all particular congregations to be constituted." None "ought" to be members of a local church who are not already members of the Universal or invisible church. That is the Baptist doctrine in the Philadelphia Confession.

Section 3 teaches the perpetuity of the Universal invisible church on earth. Local churches die and become corrupt, even synagogues of Satan. But the kingdom of Christ (the universal invisible church) shall live on in the world so long as the world lasts. This is what Jesus said would always continue in his promise in Matt. 16:18. This is the Baptist doctrine of the Universal Invisible Church. It is as plain as any other doctrine in this noble Confession and as Spiritual also.

We regret to see a tending on the part of any to sneer at this ancient Baptist doctrine. One should be slow in accusing the Philadelphia Confession of "talking wildly." We stand by the faith of the Baptist fathers on this subject as against the recently introduced modern view.—Argus.

### The Power of Unbelief.

GEORGE C. HORTER.

The cry of faith never failed to reach the ears of Christ. Amid the din and confusion of a crowded street the words of those that had faith in him attracted his attention. It was the timid touch of faith that was recognized by him as different from the rude and curious touch of the mob that pressed him, and caused virtue and power to issue from his body. The marvelous faith of the centurion was the medium through which the healing power of Christ was transmitted to the servant that lay upon a bed of sickness. The New Testament teaches us that the belief of our hearts determines the sphere of God's activity.

All force operates in the direction of least resistance. The electric current has an affinity for certain materials, which are the mediums through which its power is exerted. It is thus that man is able to harness the fractious steeds of the heavens and make them do his bidding. Through the knowledge of the laws that regulate and control the workings of physical forces man is able to utilize the powers of nature. Moreover the spiritual powers are subject to similar laws; and Matthew in the thirteenth chapter of his Gospel assures us of this fact when he affirms that Jesus "did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." When Jesus descended from the Mount of Transfiguration, where the glory and power of heaven had been manifested, he saw a sight that saddened his heart; the disciples standing helplessly before a lad who was prostrate before them, and a father imploring their aid and help. But in vain they attempted to exercise the power which hitherto had been theirs. This inability to heal the lad provoked this rebuke from Christ, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me."

How often the church stands before the world of sin with its power gone! God is unable to do any mighty works because of her unbelief. Unbelief puts a limitation upon God's power. God refrains from manifesting his power among the faithless. The medium of heaven's energy is faith. It is believing prayer that sets free the forces of heaven that rushes with mighty power against a world of sin. The pentecostal descent of the Holy Spirit is the result of the believing, upper-room petition.

It is a very trite saying that God's power is infinite. So it is. And yet an infinite power can be limited. This would seem to involve a contradiction. For how can that which is unlimited be limited? Only in this sense that God accepts limitations upon his power. The creation of the world with its laws is evidently an accepted limitation. The creation of man with his power of volition is likewise an accepted limitation. Is God's will always fulfilled? At least the good is not always triumphant in the world. Man can, at least he does, resist the entreaties of God. Although God wishes that all men should be saved, and that none should perish, yet how many are not saved? The gates of heaven are opened wide to all; a loving Christ has won forgiveness for all. Yet see the millions that prefer to enter the gates of hell, refusing the great gift of God. A God with infinite power, with infinite love cannot conquer the world (I speak reverently). A God who has created the world does not see righteousness reigning supreme.

What do these most solemn facts teach us? I think this: God never forces his will upon us. God never

works through and in a heart that is not in sympathy with him. Jesus Christ never intrudes into the secret life of a human soul that will not believe in him. Unbelief is the one great preventative to the manifestation and exercise of spiritual power. Spiritual power is imparted to us in proportion to the faith we have. Belief in God makes us unwearied in our efforts. It makes us persistent in our endeavors. Great faith induces us to give whole-hearted service. Great faith ever helps the fire of love burning within our hearts. Great faith enables us to exercise the spiritual powers granted by God.

What responsibility this truth puts upon the church! Why are there not more Pentecosts? Why is it that a spiritual work begun in our churches suddenly subsides? Jesus could do no mighty work because of their unbelief. The sermon that stirred Europe to its depths some years ago was upon this theme. "Expect great things from God; do great things for God." And the truth prevailed. For do we not expect great things from God, we will never accomplish great things for God.—Commonwealth.

### Do You Think?

Every moment of life ought to be employed in useful labor or useful rest. Killing time is a method of suicide; for as quaint Benjamin Franklin says, "Time is the stuff that life is made of." The use of much of our time is decided for us; but the spare moments which we employ according to our own will have most to do with the development of character. The best employment for our leisure moments is thinking. The reading of good books is commended and commendable, but reading is worthless except as it furnishes food for thought. This age is afflicted with a reading habit that loads the mind with a mass of crude material which it is unable to use, and much of which is useless. Almost every order of life subsists upon material gathered by others. Innumerable plants and animals have drawn from earth and air the substance that sustains and renews your body. But none of this enters your being in the form given it by the life that gathered it. It must be ground up and dissolved, and assimilated to the various forms of matter that compose your body. "Which things are an allegory." Most of the substance of your thought is taken from the thoughts of others, but it must be comprehended and analyzed, and moulded into your other forms of thinking before it becomes any valid part of your intellectual life.

If we are compelled to choose between thinking and reading it is better to think. A thought really your own, even if it be crude, is worth far more to you than the finest thoughts of others. Reading is not the only source of food for thought. You can find it in earth or sea or sky, in the vast meaning of the incidents and relations of daily life, in your own complex and wonderful being. If we have time for reading we must still think as we read. Ideas become our own only by personal mastery of them. Novel ideas need to be scrutinized with peculiar care. A delight in that which is novel, especially when it is adroitly expressed in choice and beautiful language, often sweeps men from their intellectual anchorage. When you encounter what seems a new and striking idea, first strip it of all its ornament; then weigh it; ascertain its metes and bounds; take it to pieces and put it together again; examine it in every way before you let it pass current in your thought. Think toward an end. The uncontrolled rambling of the fancy is not thought. A fact to be understood, a problem to be solved, a duty to be determined—some worthy mind must stimulate the mind to action. Then our mental powers must be restrained from endless excursions in quest of nothing in particular, and concentrated upon the matter in hand. It will be an aid to thought if we think with note book and pencil in hand, jotting down our thoughts as we proceed. This will enable us to hold before us constantly the end of our thinking and each step in its progress. A thought, when written down, can easily be examined and tested, and one thought thoroughly tested is worth a legion of untried conjectures. Each thought can be made clear and definite, so that it will have a fixed place in our mental furnishing. Gaps in our thinking can be detected and filled, and the mind can be taught to move, not by leaps and bounds, but by a regular and systematic progress.—Rev. Joseph W. Van Cleve, in Epworth Herald.

A writer in the "Christian Herald," Detroit, gives this description of the man wanted by some churches: "He must be under fifty, but not so young as to die a yearling; be a fine looker, without a thorn in the flesh, whether squinting eyes or crooked legs; come close enough to heterodoxy to be interesting and not incur its stigma; shrewd to engage fashionable sinners and not scold rich ones; tenacious for the English pronunciation of the vowels; never tripping in grammar nor in the latest etiquette and able to speak like an angel of light and love twice on each Lord's Day."

### St. Vere Utique.

Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. But there is nothing covered up that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. Wherefore whatsoever ye have said in the darkness, shall be heard in the light; and what ye have spoken in the ear in the inner chambers shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops. And I say unto you, be not afraid of them which kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn ye whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell: yea I say unto you, fear him!—Luke xii. 1-5.

O steady stars, throughout the long heavens gliding,  
That have not answered wherefore ye were sent,  
Aught know ye of this world of our abiding?  
Or are ye all of justice and content?  
Whether God's watchmen of the firmament,  
To lighten up dark deeds and human woes,  
Or blind ye fare on, and no wonderment  
May break upon your clear, pure eyes' repose;  
Whether ye doubt or doubt not, I know One that knows!

Look down, O God, upon a guilty land,  
That hath herself to foul injustice lent!  
Evil her sons alike on every hand,  
They that have done, that they do not repent,  
They looked on, that they did not prevent  
This pestilent corruption in high stations,  
This trampling on the law and the innocent,  
This shelding of the guilty. Send thy nations,  
Lord, and purge her pure, or waste her habitations!

'Twas thus when other hypocrites of yore  
Their deadly minds 'gainst our Christ Jesus bent.  
Like words they used with these to whiten o'er  
Their own deceits and shameful devilment.  
In like way cried: 'It is expedient  
That one die for the rest.' In like way trod  
Their conscience down, folded their arms, and went  
Two score years festering, clean forgetting God:  
Until He sent, and slew, and swept them out abroad!  
W. F. CHIPMAN.

### Dancing.

Henry Ward Beecher said in one of his sermons: "People ask me frequently, 'Do you think that there is any harm in dancing?' No, I do not. There is much good in it. 'Do you object, then, to dancing parties?' No, in themselves I do not. But when unknit youth, unripe muscle, unsettled and unhardened nerves are put through an excess of excitement, treated with stimulants, fed irregularly and with unwholesome food surrounded with gaiety that is excessive and which is protracted through hours when they should be asleep, I object; not because of the dancing, but because of the dissipation. It is taking the time which was unquestionably intended for sleep and spending it in the highest state of exhilaration and excitement. The harm is not in the dancing itself; for if they danced as do the pheasants, in the open air, upon the grass, under the trees and in the day, it might be commended, not as virtuous, but as belonging to those negative things that may be beautiful. But the wassail in the night, the wastefulness—I will not say of precious hours, for hours are not half so precious as nerves are—the dissipation continued night after night and week after week, it is that I deprecate as eating out the very life.

Now, this is a true and vigorous indictment of dancing as practiced in what is called society. It is one of the worst forms of dissipation. But since the temptation to excess is so great, is it not better to do as we do in regard to alcoholic beverages, to stop before we begin? If your young people never learned to dance they would not go to balls and spend the whole night in "tripping the light fantastic toe." We have other means of recreation that are far better. Then why should we dance?—Ex.

We know of a Baptist who is weak-kneed-enough-of-a-Baptist to say that unless he can find history to suit his theory he will give up his Baptist faith and go to the Catholics. Strange statement. We stand on the Bible alone. We are not a history—Baptist, but a Bible—Baptist. We are so confidently grounded upon the Bible that without the slightest uneasiness we study history at the same time without any theory to maintain, or any fears of what it may reveal.

Of two things we are assured: Believe untrue things in history, cover up its facts, and something will be sure to rot. Uncover every fact, make all of its paths plain, and nothing will be found that can harm for a moment those who are founded upon the rock, on God's Bible. In fact all the darkness we have uncovered in the ages gone but makes a background which brings out in stronger lines our Baptist faith. Clinging to the Bible and showing up all the mistakes and weakness of men and sects in the past are the two ways to take the world for our cause. Our aim is nothing less than that.—Ex.

The pastor of a certain church in Washington, on leaving his study, which is in the rear of the church, one day saw a little girl friend of his talking to a stranger. "What was that man saying to you, Madge?" he asked as he came up to her. "Oh," said she, "he just wanted to know if Dr. C— wasn't the preacher of this church." "And what did you tell him?" asked the pastor. "The little girl drew herself up with an air of great pride. 'I told him,' she answered with dignity, 'that you were the present encumbrance.'—Ex.